March 24, 1842

Today, my family and I reached Boonville, Missouri, the starting point of our journey west. I plan on bringing my family to Bent’s Old Fort to start a trading post. I have two Conestoga Wagons to carry all of our supplies for the trip and for the trading post. At my trading post I will have tents, weapons, food, tools, clothes, and other things that people will need. Now my family and I are getting ready for our long journey.

My family has mostly been in good health lately. I am slightly concerned about my youngest son Benjamin who has been developing a slight cough. I hope that his cough does not lead to a fever or Benjamin might die. Other than Benjamin, my wife and other two sons are very healthy. We may delay the start of our trip so Benjamin can get some rest.

Along our journey we plan to travel on the mountain branch when we reach the split in the Santa Fe Trail. I am new to the trail life and I am not sure how long it will take to make our journey. I think I will ask one of the wagon train leaders while I am in Boonville. I would like to meet some friendly Native Americans on my way so I can trade with them. Some Native American goods might fetch a high price at my trading post.

Oh No! I just received some horrible news. My youngest son Benjamin was walking and he passed out. My wife told me she felt his forehead and he was burning up. She got the doctor right away. The doctor said that Benjamin had a bad fever that could kill him because he was so weak. Then Benjamin died. I was very upset, but I knew I would have to move on.

We plan to set out on our journey by the end of this week. Everything should turn out to be fine. Or at least I hope it does.

By: Andrew S.